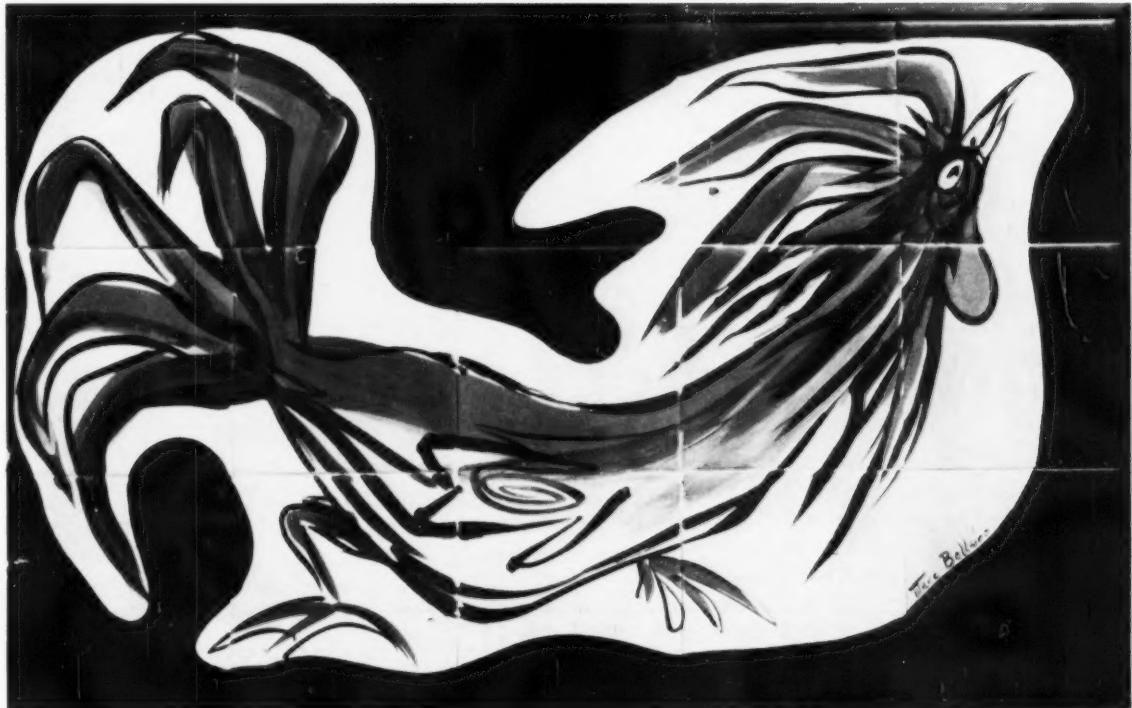


# Ceramics

MONTHLY

FEBRUARY 1959

50c



Underglaze on Tiles

738.05  
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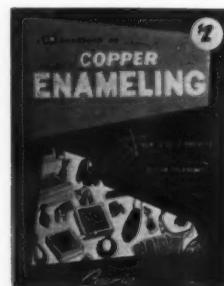
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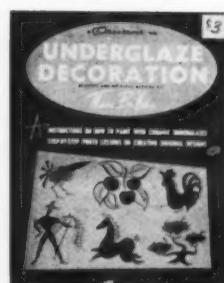
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Volume 7, Number 2

February • 1959

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**ON OUR COVER:** A close-up of a stylized rooster painted in commercial underglaze on a set of 15 tiles, to be used as a tabletop. Step-by-step instructions are given on page 15.

Editor Louis G. Farber

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# Letters

This column is for CM readers who have something to say—be it quip, query, comment or advice. All items sent in must be signed; names will be withheld on request. Send letters to: The Editor, Ceramics Monthly, 4175 N. High St., Columbus 14, Ohio.

## LANGUAGE NO BARRIER!

I am Canadian-French. I read and understand English perfectly but I have a bad grammar for writing it. I am sorry because there is so wonderful things to say about CERAMICS MONTHLY—and I can't. No person should criticize it as they do or pass remarks about somebody else's work. You are to please so many tastes and do your best. I wouldn't miss it for anything in the world. I received it for four years and enclosed is a check for three years more. I wish I could say it better. . .

MRS. CLARISSE HINTON  
Rouville, Canada

◆ You've done pretty well!—Ed.

## IT'S NO SECRET

In your January "Answers to Questions" column there was a question concerning the "base coat" enameling that was used in a class with Doris Hall and Kalman Kubinyi [her artist husband] last summer. There was no mystery concerning the materials they used. I obtained full details on this material while there; however, I could not get it from the Thomas C. Thompson Co. as they said they no longer supplied it. I then wrote to Doris Hall

and they sent me several quarts [for a nominal cost].

I can't imagine why the person asking the question didn't ask Doris Hall or Mr. Kubinyi; I have never met or worked with two more gracious people—and you may quote me. . .

DOROTHY BURMANN  
Pittsburgh, Pa.

## ANY OLD ISSUES?

. . . I have already obtained from you all the back issues that were available and regretted the fact that I could not get all of them. So, I must tell you how fortunate I have been. There was an ad in a local paper of some ceramic equipment for sale. In looking things over, I discovered that there were all of the issues of CM right back to the very first one!

We bought enough of the equipment so that we were able to have our first ceramic classes with 15 pupils this past summer. The articles in CERAMICS MONTHLY are a wonderful help and inspiration to us.

LUCILLE HOLZHERR  
Clinton Corners, N. Y.

In checking our files of CERAMICS MONTHLY I find that we are missing October 1956.

Since we regard your periodical very highly we would like to fill in this gap if possible. I would, therefore, appreciate knowing if you have a back copy of the missing number which we might be able to obtain.

KENNETH N. METCALF, Librarian  
Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village  
Dearborn, Mich.

◆ Fortunately, a copy of this issue is still available and has been forwarded. Anyone with a "critical problem" like this is encouraged to bring it to the attention of the editor. Sometimes we are able to locate soiled, but still intact, copies of issues that are out of print. In others instances we can supply tearsheets of a specific article if the entire issue isn't available.—Ed.

## DUTCH PEN PAL WANTED

I see in the December CM you mention having subscribers in 59 foreign countries. I would like to correspond with someone in Delft, Holland. . . . Do you have an address there in your file? . . .

MRS. R. B. KIMBLE  
Princeton, N. J.

◆ Delft isn't represented; however, four other cities are. We hope these will prove helpful.—Ed.

## BE AN AUTHOR!

I am an avid reader of CM. A short time ago I became aware that your articles on group ceramic classes are written by the instructors themselves, or at least not by the regular staff.

I instruct nine classes a week, a total  
(Continued on Page 34)

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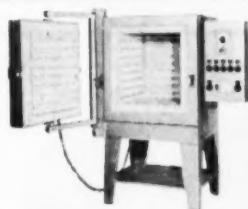
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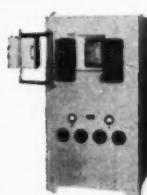


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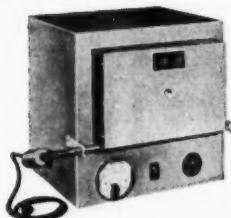
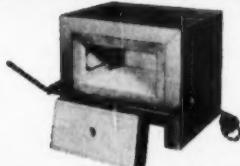
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# Itinerary

Send show announcements early—**WHERE TO SHOW:** three months ahead of entry date; **WHERE TO GO:** at least six weeks before opening.

### WHERE TO SHOW

#### ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN March 8-22

The 10th annual Christocentric Arts Festival to be held at the Newman Foundation, Univ. of Illinois. Media: Painting, sculpture, ceramics, graphics. Fee \$3; Prizes; Jury. Entry cards due February 13; Deadline for work: February 16. For further information write: Harry F. Breen, Newman Foundation, 6 East Armory St., Champaign, Ill.

#### KANSAS, WICHITA

April 11-May 20

The 14th National Decorative Arts-Ceramic Exhibition to be held at The Wichita Art Association. Jury: entry fee, \$3.00; awards over \$2500. Deadline for entry: March 14. For further information write Mrs. Maude Schollenberger, The Wichita Art Ass'n., 401 N. Belmont Ave., Wichita, Kansas.

#### MASSACHUSETTS, ANDOVER

April 4-May 3

"Massachusetts Crafts of Today", a juried exhibition to be held at the Addison Gallery of American Art. Residents of Massachusetts, teachers and students eligible. Massachusetts crafts for the 1959 Boston Arts Festival will be selected from this exhibition. Awards; museum purchase prize. Fee: Members of the Massachusetts Association of Handcraft Groups, \$1; non-members, \$2. Deadline for work: March 12. For additional information, write the Addison Gallery.

#### NEW YORK, ALBANY

February 27-March 22

"Designer-Craftsmen, 1959", sponsored by the York State Craftsmen, will be held at the Albany Institute of History and Art. Jury: prizes. Fee: \$1. Deadline for work: February 5. For additional information and entry blanks, write Miss Janet MacFarlane, York State Craftsmen, Chamber of Commerce, Ithaca, New York.

#### OHIO, TOLEDO

May 3-24

The Toledo Area Artists will hold their 41st annual exhibition at the Toledo Museum of Art. Entries in all recognized art media. Jury. Entry fee \$3. Cash, special awards, purchase prizes. Deadline for work April 11. For additional information write June Albright, corresponding secretary, Toledo Federation of Art Societies, 2635 Gunckel Blvd., Toledo, Ohio.

#### WASHINGTON, SEATTLE

March 8-April 8

Seventh Annual Northwest Craftsmen's Exhibition. Open to craftsmen of Washington. (Continued on Page 8)

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# Q Answers to Questions

Conducted by the CM Technical Staff

**Q** Can you tell me how I can glaze-fire small (2-3 in.) birds. Their configurations do not allow using stilts. I have tried inserting a wire in them and putting the wire in firebrick but the wire softens and allows the bird to touch the brick.

You could fashion a stilt from grogged clay that would exactly fit the bird and hold it to best advantage. Fire this stilt and then use it over and over again. Special wire such as nichrome will not soften at your firing temperatures and should work very well. The best idea is not to use any stilt at all on these small items. Carefully clean all glaze from the bottom of the piece, set it on a kiln-washed shelf and fire.—KEN SMITH

**Q** Where can I buy an inexpensive oil-burning kiln for use in making ceramics as a hobby?

I do not know of a small, inexpensive oil-burning kiln for hobby use. Gas, kerosene and oil-burning kilns are available in "home" sizes, but the cost generally starts around \$700. Electric kilns are very inexpensive and require no installation other than plugging a cord into your regular house outlet. These are used almost exclusively by the hobby potter.

**Q** I am a part time ceramics teacher and one of my students is a man who wishes to do maps on tile. He would like to know how the lettering and fine-line work is done since he is convinced it is impossible to get a uniform line with a brush.

There are special pens for applying gold and other overglazes to glazed ware; however, a pen will not give a fine line on a raw or bisque surface. Sgraffito is one technique that is easily accomplished. You can paint an engobe or underglaze on a tile surface and scratch through to expose the body, making fine lines in this way. A good lettering brush, however, and a lot of practice, will be your best tool.

**Q** What method do you use to break glass so there will be no dangerous slivers? I want to use powdered glass in flat ceramic decoration. Also, to what cone should I fire the glass?

One of the safest ways to break glass is to do it under water. Setting it in the bottom of a bucket full of water will prevent flying slivers. The glass has to be dried before using.

For best firing results, make tiny sample firings at different temperatures. By observing the results you can determine the proper cone to use.

**Q** I recently purchased some red-firing clay from a local source and was assured it was a good pottery clay. It handled nicely for hand-building and throwing; however, after firing, a white powdery film appeared on the surface. This is hardly desirable under clear glazes or if a piece is to be left unglazed. What is wrong with the clay and is there something I can do to remedy this?

You have run into a very common difficulty called "scumming." This is caused by certain chemicals in the clay (soluble sulphates) which should not be present in a good pottery clay. This scum, incidentally, comes to the

(Continued on Page 11)

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## Itinerary

(Continued from Page 6)

ington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, British Columbia and Alaska, will be held at the Henry Gallery. Jury; Prizes. Deadline for work: February 7. For additional information and entry blanks write the Henry Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle 5, Wash.

### WHERE TO GO

ALABAMA, TUSCALOOSA  
through March 15

"National Ceramic Exhibition", Smithsonian Institution Traveling exhibition. At the University of Alabama.

ARIZONA, TUCSON  
through February 15

Tucson Fine Art Ass'n. Craft Guild exhibition at the Tucson Art Center. Entries by area craftsmen in this show titled "Crafts '59".

CANADA, MONTREAL

February 12 through April

Biennial exhibition "Canadian Ceramics of 1959" sponsored by the Canadian Handicrafts Guild and Canadian Guild of Potters. At Montreal Museum of Art.

KANSAS, TOPEKA

March 1-April 15

An exhibition of pottery by Bernard Leach at The Mulvane Art Center.

NEBRASKA, OMAHA

February 17-March 31

Midwest Designer-Craftsmen Exhibition, co-sponsored by Joslyn Art Museum and Midwest Designer-Craftsmen. At Joslyn Art Museum, 2218 Dodge Street.

NEW HAMPSHIRE, DURHAM

April 8-25

Exhibition of the New Hampshire Craft Guild for 1959 to be held at the University of New Hampshire. Pieces from this exhibition will be selected for showing at the 1959 Boston Arts Festival.

NEW HAMPSHIRE, MANCHESTER

through March 15

"British Artist-Craftsmen", Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition. At Currier Gallery of Art.

NEW HAMPSHIRE, MANCHESTER

March 4-April 5

The 1959 New Hampshire Craft Guild Exhibition. Includes all crafts. Sponsored by the League of New Hampshire Arts and Crafts. At Currier Gallery of Art.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

through March 8

"Ceramic International" Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Pottery and sculpture from the current "Syracuse Show" includes 200 ceramic works from 10 invited European countries and 150 pieces from the United States, Canada and Hawaii.

SOUTH CAROLINA, COLUMBIA

through February 15

Fulbright Designers, Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition at the Columbia Museum of Art.

TENNESSEE, MEMPHIS

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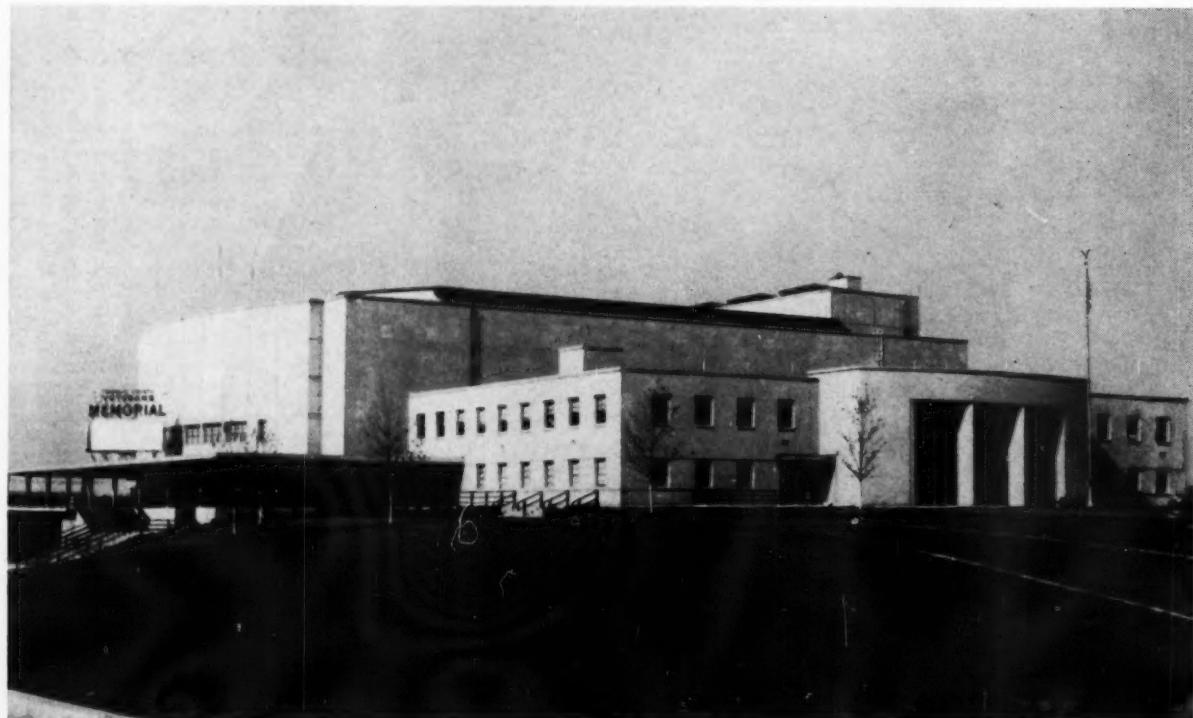
N. J.

# The CERAMIC NATIONAL TRADE SHOW & WORKSHOP

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April 30, May 1, 2, 3, 1959

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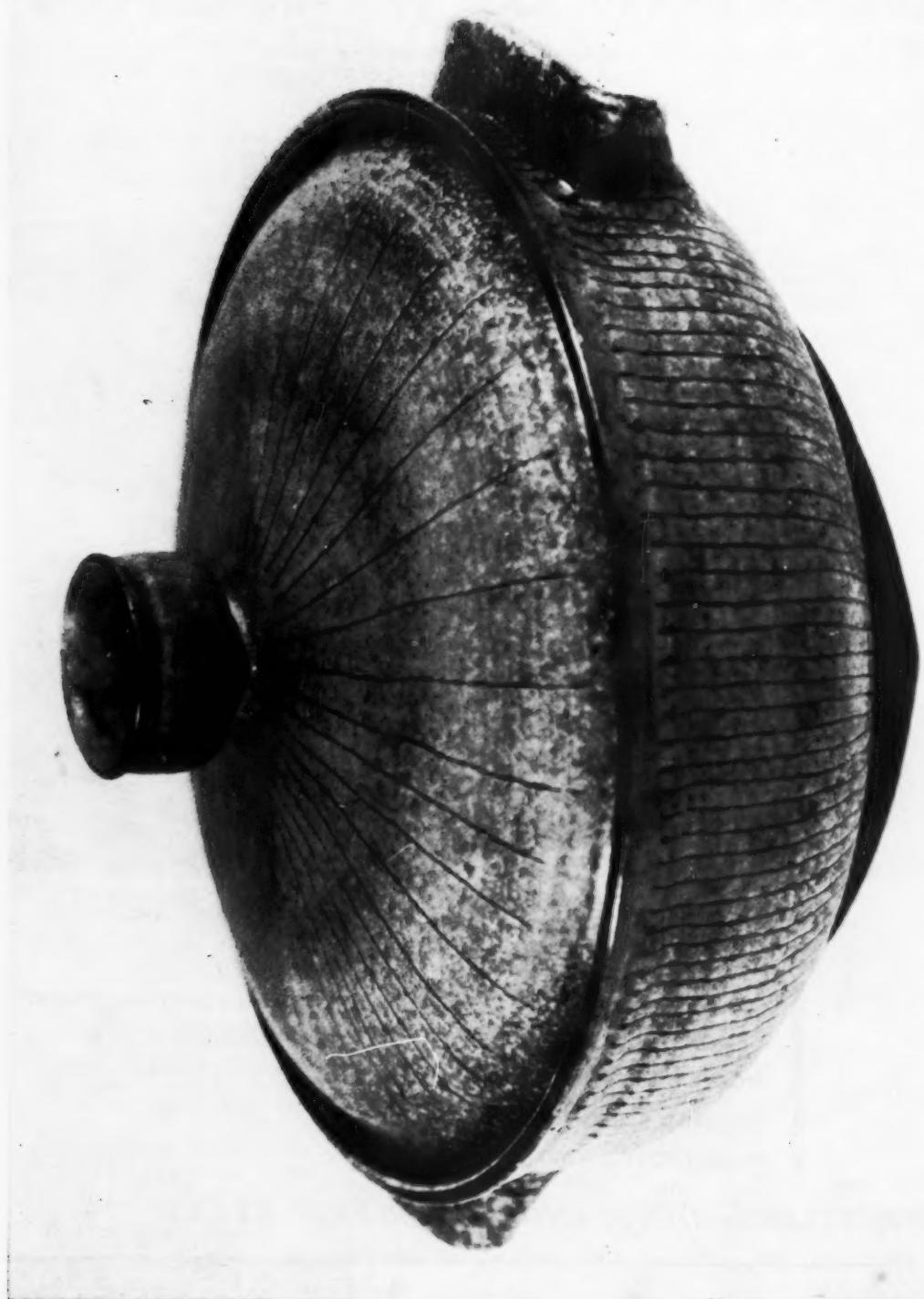
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Photo: W. A. Rider, Bowling Green  
Mrs. Shaffer studied at Bowling Green State University and at present is teaching a class in ceramics offered by the Bowling Green Adult Education Program. Her casserole was purchased by the Toledo Federation of Art Societies and is in their lending collection. The Toledo 40th exhibition was held at The Toledo Museum.



**CM's Pic of the Month:** Floy Shaffer took the top award at the Toledo Area Artists' 40th Annual Exhibition with this casserole. Made of Zanesville stoneware clay the piece is 14 inches in diameter. The handles were thrown, then cut and shaped. It is decorated with a scratched-in design over a white matt base and an engobe of red clay and frit was sprayed overall. Mrs. Shaffer studied at Bowling Green State University and at present is teaching a class in ceramics offered by the Bowling Green Adult Education Program. Her casserole was purchased by the Toledo Federation of Art Societies and is in their lending collection. The Toledo 40th exhibition was held at The Toledo Museum.

# Answers to Questions

(Continued from Page 7)

surface during the drying, but it isn't noticeable against the unfired clay, showing up strongly against the red clay during the firing.

Your easiest solution is to switch to a good clay. If you insist on using this clay you can try to prevent the scumming by mixing a few per cent of barium carbonate with the dry clay then adding water and following your regular mixing and wedging procedure. To determine the exact amount of barium carbonate needed you will have to run a trial and error series of tests to see at what percentage the scum will no longer appear after firing.—CM Staff.

**Q** Can you tell me what kind of clay can be fired in the home oven and do you know of any glazes that can be used with this type of clay?

A "clay" that can be "fired" in the home oven is not a ceramic material. Ceramic clays and glazes must be fired to at least dull-red heat (around 1400-1500°F), which is not feasible in a home oven where maximum temperature is around 550°F. Specially designed furnaces (called kilns) must be used for this purpose.

There are materials that harden under low oven heat; however, these are in the paint and plastic category—not ceramic.

All subscriber inquiries are given individual attention at CM; and out of the many received, those of general interest are selected for answer in this column. Direct your inquiries to the Questions Editor; please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.



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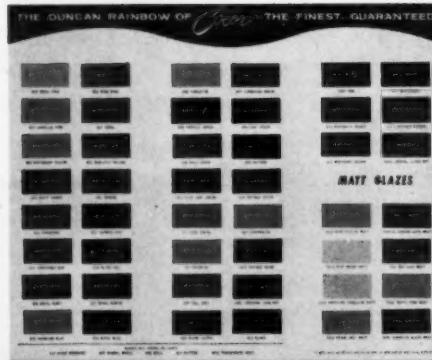
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## SHOW TIME

# KANSAS DESIGNER-CRAFTSMAN

THE FIFTH ANNUAL Designer-Craftsman show was held October 26 through November 15 at the Union Building of the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas.

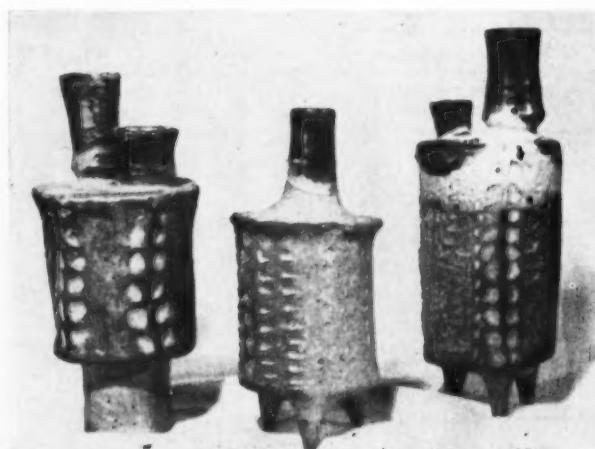
The show was open to residents of Kansas and Kansas City, Mo. Represented in the show were 191 pieces of 86 craftsmen. Ceramics, sculpture, silversmithing, furniture and textile exhibits were eligible and prizes in the amount of \$785 were given.

First prize winner in ceramics was Maryln Austin of Osawatomie, Kan-

sas for her three stoneware bottles. She received a \$100 award. Second prize went to Angelo Garzio of Manhattan, Kansas for his stoneware "Branch Bottles"—three slab and wheel thrown elements. He was awarded a \$60 prize. Award-winning pieces are shown.

Judges for the Designer-Craftsman Show were David Campbell, Executive Director of the American Craftsmen's Council; Josie Eresch, craftsman and world traveler; and Dr. Edward Maser, Curator of the Art Museum, University of Kansas. •

Angelo Garzio of Manhattan, Kansas was awarded second prize for his "Branch Bottles"—slab and wheel thrown stoneware



First prize award of \$100 was won by Maryln Austin of Osawatomie, Kansas for the set of three stoneware bottles



### A DIFFERENT KIND OF MOSAIC

We have all been told many times that one cannot enamel brass successfully. The enamel dislodges after firing. Since I am "from Missouri," I have to try it myself.

I put a nice coat of enamel on a nice piece of brass and fired it. I took it out of the kiln and it looked beautiful—an even layer of enamel, shiny and smooth. Then it cooled and all of a sudden, sure as pie, there was my nice shiny layer of enamel, all in one piece, completely separated from its nice piece of brass. Well, that's it; it can't be done I guess. And there I was with a nice thin sheet of glass that had dislodged from its base.

It could be used for something, but for what? The piece was thin and broke into many little pieces. I placed some of these little chips on a coat of fired enamel and put it in the kiln. The piece came out of the fire with the chips fused onto it, and the chips had kept their original shapes. The chips also were raised on the background and had very narrow grooves in between them. It looked very much like the Venetian mosaic jewelry. But we don't want to copy exactly, and we don't have to. We can invent different designs. This mosaic-like effect looks very handsome as a pattern on a smoothly fired background. I have done quite large pieces that way, and they look intriguing. This technique can be used for an all-over pattern, but on anything larger than the average piece of jewelry, it certainly is a lot of work. By the way, buttons look very good when done this way.

To make an enamel mosaic, first cut pieces of brass and sift on a coat of enamel. Use only opaque enamel. The brass leaves some black firescale—or whatever it is—sort of a discoloration on the back of the dislodged enamel. This changes the color of transparents. With opaques it doesn't make any difference.

Sift on a solid color on each piece of brass, having one piece for each color you want to use for the mosaic. Fire and let the pieces cool off. Sometimes the enamel comes off all in one piece all by itself. Sometimes it decides to come off only part of the way. If it does that, you have to help it a little by bending the brass or tapping it slightly with a hammer.

When all the colors you want are dislodged from the brass, fold each color separately into a piece of strong paper—something like a druggist uses for powders. Put the envelopes on a hard, flat surface and roll a pencil over each (like a rolling pin over a pie crust dough) to crush the enamel inside. When you unfold the envelopes, you have all the little pieces neatly together. Always work directly from these envelopes to keep the colors separated. If these tiny pieces of color get mixed up, you get into a terrible mess.

Now prepare and fire your background for the mosaic. This can be a solid color or many colors. If the whole piece is to be covered with the mosaic pattern, the color of the background is not important since, if the

(Continued on Page 14)

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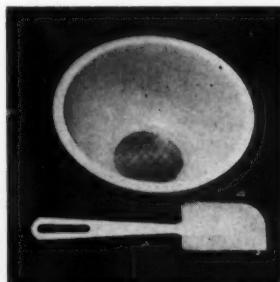
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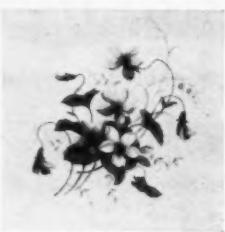
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# Suggestions

from our readers

**Cleaning Molds**

When casting greenware have at hand a piece of dry terry cloth or huck toweling and when greenware is removed from mold rub any clay particles left on mold off in a jiffy. Rub from the outer edge of mold toward the inside to protect the edges. This way your mold is not further dampened as it is when wet clothes or sponges are used.

—Laoma Buenneke, Albert Lea, Minn.

**Holder for Kiln Posts**

A holder for kiln posts can be a real time saver when you're loading the kiln. Use a board 12" x 36" x 1/2" and nail large finishing nails (headless nails) into the board at an angle, spacing them about two inches apart. The holder may be hung on the wall near the kiln, and the posts placed on the nails.

—Lucille Gerbig Ceramics  
Cincinnati, Ohio

**Enamel Spreaders**

I have found that ordinary round or square nibbed lettering pen points, inserted into pen holders, make excellent enamel spreaders. This makeshift tool has several advantages for high school classes in enameling: Lettering points and holders are standard equipment in most schools, each student can have his own enamel spreader, pen points are much less expensive than professional enameling tools, and since the student is familiar with this type of pen, he therefore has much more confidence in using it. The angle of the nib can be adjusted with a slight twist of pliers.

—Donald P. Sowell, Cincinnati, Ohio  
(Continued on Page 31)

**Enameler's Column**

(Continued from Page 13)

pieces are put near to each other, it does not show.

However, if the mosaic is to be only a part of the pattern, the mosaic has to be handled according to the design. Now, with a brush, lay on a thin coat of flux or background color where the mosaic is to be placed. Then, with pointed tweezers, pick up a chip. Dip it in water and place it where it belongs in the design. Do this for each of the chips.

It pays, before you do this, to put your nose into an art book and look at some Byzantine mosaics to see how the pieces are placed according to form. I think that this could enrich your designs greatly.

When all the pieces are in place, heat up your firing rack in the kiln. Carefully set down your treasure on the hot rack, and when it is thoroughly warmed up, fire it with the greatest of care. Watch the piece. First it fuses and the chips stand raised and sharply separated like little stones. If you go on firing, the pieces will sink in more and more so that they are level with the background and look sort of like an inlay. Be careful that you don't overfire. If you do, all your work was for nothing and you have a mess!

The CM UNDERGLAZE Series  
demonstrated by MARC BELLAIRE

## Paint a Tabletop on Tiles



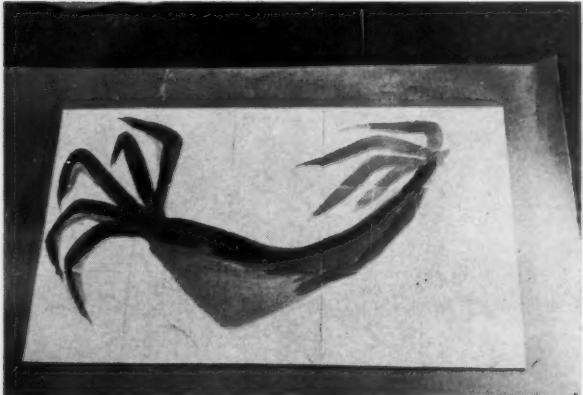
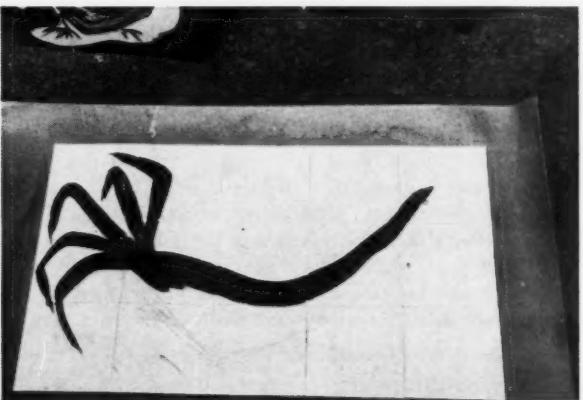
**S**OONER OR LATER tile painting is tried by every hobby decorator. Why the appeal? Tiles look easy—and often are easy—to decorate. The flat rectangular shape, looking exactly like a sheet of paper, is familiar to everyone and holds no fears as a three-dimensional shape might. In addition, they can be used around the home in many ways: hot plates, paper weights, trivets, table tops, wall decorations—and many others.

Invariably a single tile for a hot plate will be the first project attempted. The assured success quickly leads the decorator to making a series of three tiles, to be mounted in a handsome wrought-iron frame as a tray or trivet. Now the appetite is really whetted and a larger project comes into view.

One of the most intriguing projects is a table top to be used as a coffee table or end table in the home or patio. Such a decorating project is demonstrated here.

This is no trickier than any other kind of ceramic decorating. It can represent a great deal more time and effort, however, so there will be particular anxiety to be sure that perfect results are obtained. And there is no reason why you shouldn't have perfect results—provided you have established proper decorating habits.

*Please turn the Page*



A SPONTANEOUS DECORATION will have more vitality and will be more interesting than one that is laboriously and painstakingly painted. Try a "free-hand" decoration; you will agree that the results are more appealing. Before attempting a detailed painting practice painting a simple motif using water color and paper. When it is finished, prop it up as a guide and paint another, making improvements as you go. Repeat this procedure until the entire motif is memorized and you can paint it with unhesitating brush strokes. Then practice making brush strokes with underglaze on a ceramic surface so that you can adjust to the different feel of the brush, as compared with the water color and paper. Now paint the motif in underglaze on your tiles—using the same unhesitating strokes. This new-found decorating freedom is bound to impress and please you.



5

(Continued from preceding page)

This is particularly important with an all-over spontaneous design like the one demonstrated here, because if one tile is ruined the entire project is ruined. You will never be able to redo one tile and match the brush strokes, the exact color effect and the feeling in general.

The most common defects the decorator runs into are flaking or peeling away of the decoration during firing and "color disappearing in the kiln". These can be easily avoided. If the surface is clean and quite damp and has a good "tooth", and if the underglaze is at the proper consistency it will not flake in the kiln.

(The kiln doesn't "steal" colors, as so many beginning hobbyists erroneously assume. If the color cannot be seen after firing, it means that not enough underglaze was painted on in the first place. Do not thin the underglaze too much, use as large a brush as the design will permit and load it to near-dripping capacity.)

Here are some specific suggestions.

The tiles you use can be either green (unfired) or bisque. Bisqued tiles may be the better choice here because the unfired tiles will not stand up under as much handling; corners or edges might chip. In addition, if the decorating extends over a lengthy period it would be difficult to keep the tiles moist enough.

If you do choose to work on green tiles be sure to

In this series of articles, no specific brand of underglaze is either suggested or implied. The nationally advertised brands are highly competitive in quality and price. Mr. Bellaire's advice is to use those brands you feel give you the best results.



6



7



8

**THE ROOSTER MOTIF** started out as a water color. The original was propped up as a guide and the outline was sketched in with pencil on the tiles (1). The tiles, cleaned and dampened, were butted together on wrapping paper on the floor. Loading his largest brush to capacity, Bellaire starts the motif in long, sweeping strokes of blue-green (2). Yellow goes in next (3). A dry-brush effect of rose over the yellow goes on the breast (4). The headdress starts out in teal blue. More overtones of blue-green and blue (5) are followed by brown for the feet (6). Now the liner brush is used to snap up the entire motif with black (7). A black frame (8) completes the painting. A closeup of the tiles glazed and fired is on the front cover; and inset in a coffee table (with 15 additional tiles in black) on page 15.

clean the surface with a quite-damp sponge removing all fingerprints, dust and other surface dirt. Avoid polishing the surface; instead, roughen it with the sponge, creating a "tooth", which will work best for your brush strokes. Some decorators have solved the problem of keeping greenware moist by periodically spraying them with a fine mist of water in a flit gun or electric sprayer. (The mist will not disturb the decoration.)

Bisque tiles should also be carefully cleaned with a wet sponge, removing dust, dirt, fingerprints and other oily residues. If tiles have become quite dirty and will not clean up, do not throw them away. Stack them in your kiln and fire on a normal schedule to dull red heat (around 1200-1400° F.). The dirt will be burned out.

Before starting to decorate, dampen the tiles and try to keep them damp during the entire painting procedure. One method used by decorators is to lay a fairly thick pad of wet newspapers under the tiles. As the top of the tiles dry the bottom surface will be absorbing water from the wet paper maintaining dampness.

Number the tiles and set them in order on a large table top or on the floor—wherever it will be most comfortable for you to work. Be sure the tiles are firmly butted together and plan to decorate across the entire surface as though it were a single sheet of clay. A much more interesting design will be obtained this way.

When the decorating is completed, thoroughly dry the tiles, then bisque fire. Even if you use bisqued tiles you should fire the decorated tiles to harden-on the

colors. The bisque-fired tiles are then ready to be glazed.

Be sure each tile receives the same thickness of glaze to avoid a variation in appearance. If the glaze is brushed on be sure to brush each with the same number of coatings. If the glaze is to be sprayed the safest way is to set the tiles in proper order—but not quite touching—and spray the entire surface at the same time.

The best way to mount the completed tiles depends, of course, on where and how they are to be used. For a table top they can be merely set in place without glueing or cementing, or they can be permanently affixed. It depends on how much use the table will receive.

To set them in permanently you can use any household glue or tile cement; if you like you can separate the tiles slightly and put grout between them. Whether or not this can be accomplished depends on the design.

If the tiles are to remain loose they can be set directly on the plywood base or on a piece of felt stretched out over all for a cushioning effect.

For use outdoors it would be best to permanently mount the tiles on a waterproof base using waterproof cement. A thin coating of grout between the tiles is also recommended to keep out dust and dirt.

One particularly interesting tile idea is to create a motif that will occupy only a portion of the table top. This gives you a larger and more impressive setting for your creative efforts. In addition, the table can still be used for a lamp, candy dish, ashtrays, etc., without hiding the results of your labors. •



A VISIT TO THE KILNS OF . . .

## *Shoji Hamada*

world famous Japanese folk potter

by ELIZABETH SPENCE

"HOW MUCH did you pay for it?" was a universal and socially approved question among Americans in Japan with the Occupation forces when I was there from late 1947 through 1950.

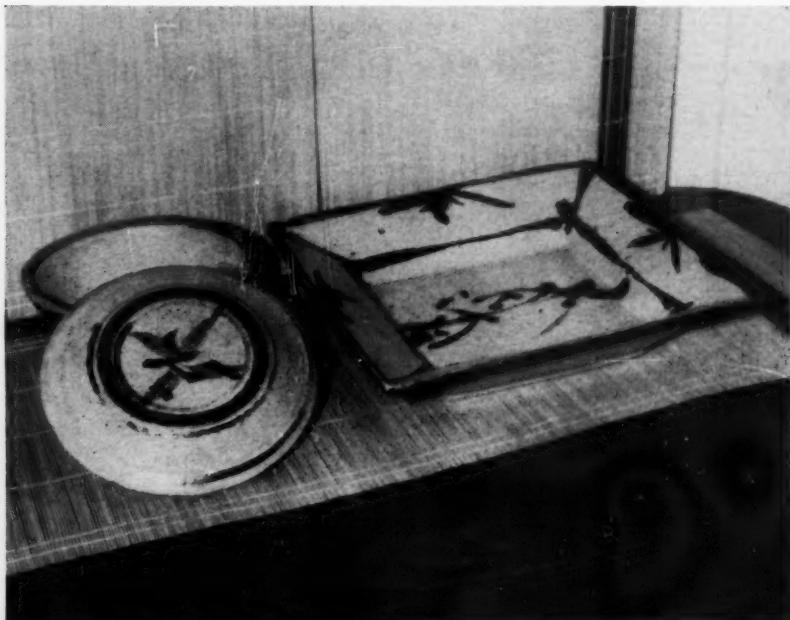
Far from giving offense to the curio-laden shopper, the crass greeting usually was taken as a flattering tribute to some cherished purchase—be it a gigantic Imari platter, a teak-wood chow table or even a hideous dragon-embroidered kimono with

which some earnest soldier was going to overwhelm his mother or girl-friend.

In those days, practically everyone was a collector of sorts. With time on our hands and money burning in our pockets after the Army's negligible mess and billeting deductions, we civilian Occupationnaires could not be otherwise. Swapping exhaustive price data naturally followed as a means of appraising and controlling objets d'art.

Once I was roundly lectured by a billet-mate for paying the yen equivalent of about ten dollars for a string of apple green jade beads. She gave me to know that such heedless buying was unfair to my fellow Occupationnaires. My countrymen would be expected to pay as much when the word of my profligacy got around among the dealers. I was coldly informed.

Usually, however, we complimented one another on our acumen in persuading the shopkeepers to "give" us



PLATTER AND CASSEROLE, examples of the work of the noted Japanese potter, were purchased by the author during a visit to Mashiko, Japan.



THE POTTER'S SON wraps each piece of pottery in rice straw for protection.

such treasures for so few trifling yen.

Ceramics were a favorite collector's item and I quickly found myself a devotee of the art. Consequently it was inevitable that in a country where fine vases and tea bowls were treasured like jewels, and their makers almost as famous as movie stars, that I should soon hear of the noted artist potter, Shoji Hamada. When I rushed to an exhibit of his work, however, I found that more experienced collectors had already bought all the representative examples within the range of my purse. So I simply drooled over the exhibit and sadly examined the price tags on already sold items to see how much my fellow collectors had paid for the simple but beautiful ware made by the master craftsman.

Months later I could scarcely believe my good fortune when a friend asked if I would like to go with a group of pottery aficionados in her car to Mashiko where Hamada lived and worked. As the spot was located beyond the range of regular military transportation and away from train routes, I had not even hoped to get there. To be making the trip in a plush *stateside* car with springs, congenial company and a Japanese driver, seemed too good to be true. The driver—or *Driversan* (honorable driver) as he became in my pigeon Japanese—was not the least of our travel assets. He piloted the car between axle-breaker holes in the road with the finesse of a tight rope performer, served as an interpreter of sorts and presided over the auto radio

with a whim of iron that left no room for disagreement among his passengers.

We started out on a cold and drizzling spring morning and crept along the deeply pitted road. Driversan skillfully missed the worst bumps and all the bicycles, pushcarts, Japanese pedestrians and oxen that emerged crazily in our path. Though we could have gone farther even at our snail's pace, we spent the night at Nikko in order to reach the kiln early the next day. Next morning's sun came bright and clear, making the drive through the rolling country a pure joy. Driversan's questions and Hamada's fame readily guided us through the labyrinth of rural roads to our destination.

Most Japanese farm dwellings are clustered closely together in little villages surrounded by tracts of cultivated land. But we found Hamada's classic Japanese country home set somewhat apart, on the outskirts of Mashiko. It stood on a low hill, circled by its own fields and outbuildings.

We entered the grounds by an inviting rustic gate and drove up a curved road to the one-story main building. This—like the other buildings—was built of weathered wood which fitted unobtrusively into the landscape, achieving a oneness with nature which our painted houses cannot.

Though large, as Japanese houses go, it was more notable for its pleasing proportions than its size.

We were greeted by a young man

whom we assumed to be one of Hamada's students. Later we learned he was the potter's son. The younger Hamada took us to a somewhat dilapidated shed which served as a display room. The conversation was hampered by our extremely limited knowledge of Japanese and our host's inability or unwillingness to speak English.

Our driver ordinarily confined himself to a few words of English. On the trip to Mashiko he had given no sign of understanding our constant chatter. But in the crisis of our struggle to communicate with Hamada's son, Driversan gallantly stepped into the role of interpreter. After a long conversation in Japanese, he gave us to understand that we had come at a poor time. Had we arrived some months ago, soon after the last firing of the kiln, we would have had a much wider selection from which to buy.

Prices at the kiln were considerably cheaper than they had been at the Hamada exhibit in Tokyo or in the art store which displayed his work. But I did not see anything that I liked as well as some I had seen at the show.

While I waivered others in the party made their selections. Soon the supply of the master's work still on display unsold was quite depleted. Finally I chose a small covered baking dish, the unassuming design and simple decoration of which pleased me. Then I timidly asked if a square

(Continued on Page 30)



ENTRANCE to one of Hamada's many kilns. During firing the doorway is sealed with the bricks shown in the foreground.



HAMADA sits with his young son in the kitchen of his farm home in Mashiko. Visitors travel far to admire his art.

*"I learned to ignore my children with loving skill."*

# HOT KILNS AND HAPPY MOTHERHOOD

by LAURA K. POPENOE

I have three children—seven, four and two. For years I've been juggling time trying to meet the needs of husband, small children, friends, home, community—and me. All I asked for myself, (*all*, she says!) was a few hours a day to devote to kiln mysteries, both clay and enamels. (All of you potters-turned-mothers, and mothers-turned-potters appreciate the problem. We're much easier to live with when we can keep our fingers in the mud-pie.)

Of course, things had to get worse and worse before they became better. Over the years I've become an expert on schedules that don't work. I tried to cram all housework, desk work, laundry and cooking into three week days, and reserved two whole days for my craft projects. Aside from becoming an exhausted wreck on those three heavy-labor days, the general perversity of all things animate and inanimate broke into my two lovely "free" days.

So I went up another blind alley. I tried to get required work done in the mornings, in order to have free afternoons. But I found I was either finishing the work in the afternoons, or doing it after dinner at night. When a friend called one morning and asked if talking to her was on my schedule, I realized that this one had clearly gone far enough.

Still another fiasco to discard was the "Twenty Minute Plan" which I read about in a magazine for mothers. The idea was to do one big job after breakfast each day. Not the general cleaning, but something special like cleaning some woodwork, polishing brass, or straightening a closet. Just work twenty minutes, then quit. The article said if I kept this up I'd never have any looming heavy work. It took me twenty minutes just to get some old love letters from one closet in order so I could read them!

AT LAST I have found some less-rigid ways of enjoying personal fulfillment with small children. It started one day when a harassed mother wrote a pleading letter to the advice column in our local newspaper. She asked for help in scheduling her day so she'd have more free time. She was obviously a fellow-seeker, so I promptly mailed in whatever schedule I was using at the time. About one week later, the same column printed a rejoinder to my letter, written by a man.

"Mrs. Laura Popeno's letter on successful and happy housewifery is unduly mechanistic and ignores the philosophy of the problem. I submit that the approach is more



important than the method . . . Dirt is natural; cleanliness is unnatural. If you accept this principle, you can derive a great deal of satisfaction from putting your house into an unnatural state, when you feel the inclination, in order to savor the esthetic pleasures of the clean, the good, the beautiful. To believe the reverse, forces you inevitably into the tyranny of endless effort to eliminate each speck of dust before it alights on the table. Remember, the house exists to serve the family; the family doesn't exist to serve the house . . ."

To my great surprise, this letter was signed, Oliver Popeno—my husband! The big lesson for me, has been this: SPEND MORE TIME ON ENAMELING AND CERAMICS BECAUSE THESE SHOW PERMANENT RESULTS. SPEND LESS TIME ON THE FINE POINTS OF HOUSEWORK.

There's another related principle, which sounds obvious enough, but needs practice to become habit-forming. NEVER DO ANYTHING WHEN YOUR CHILDREN ARE SLEEPING THAT YOU CAN POSSIBLY DO WHEN THEY ARE AWAKE.

Banish the thought of dishes, laundry, cooking, beds and such when your children are sleeping. Nights and naptimes are for you. These household chores can be done in the presence of little helping hands. But when the little ones are asleep, quit such jobs *immediately*.

After lunch the children are put down for naps. From one to three is quiet time. If they wake up earlier, they are allowed to play, but must stay in their rooms until I come. When my non-napper is not at school, she plays quietly in her room.

I answer no phones or doorbells; a sign on the door says, "Come back at three." My husband can reach me in an emergency with one ring on the phone followed by a regular call a minute later. If I were lucky enough to be a studio craftsman, working away from home, I'd be unreachable, so I take that same privilege for two hours a day at home. It makes me feel so business-like!

Can you imagine what joy those two hours are? They seem like the shortest two hours in the day, but using this island in time *right now*, and not waiting until the children are all in school, has made a happier woman of me. (Tell me, mothers-of-children-all-in-school, do you have a lot more time now, or is that a fiction?) I used to feel so worn out, I would take a nap along with the children—but the psychologists who talk about relieving fatigue by doing interesting things, rather than resting, were talking to me!

"But how" you ask, "can you be creative by the clock?" I truly find that, for myself, daily plugging gets better results than that elusive wisp, Inspiration. One day's work leads to another.

(Continued on Page 31)



*Cardboard cheese boxes, tin cans  
and trapped air help form  
an interesting pitcher which  
can be made in 30 minutes,  
with this easy building technique*

## MAKE a PITCHER from cheese boxes

by DON WOOD

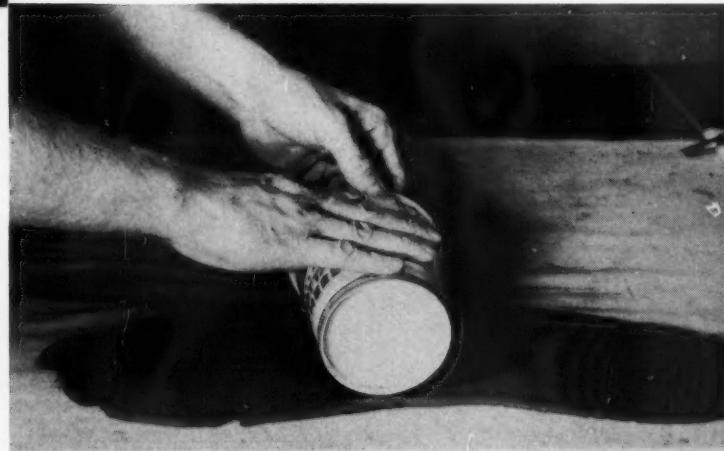
**B**ETTER BALANCE in design results when the construction method demonstrated here is employed in hand building. One of the advantages of this method is that it allows the hand builder to deal with the *whole* piece quickly, thereby allowing him to respond to size and proportion, weight and *feel* more spontaneously—a decided advantage over the slower coil-building method.

Discarded cardboard cheese boxes, trapped air, and two tin cans are the *tools* needed for making this pitcher. The choice of the cardboard containers sets the pace for the visualization of clay thickness, handle size, height of the foot rim and shape of the pouring lip. Since the entire piece can be made within 30 minutes, all judgments concerning the proportions of the various parts can be made while the clay is of the same consistency and still workable. This is an important advantage because it allows you to adjust all the parts according to the needs of the whole, resulting in better balance in design.

The construction procedure is simple: Using thickness guides and a rolling pin, roll out slabs of clay large enough to fit the insides of the two cardboard containers. Now roll the container on the clay slab in order to impress the pattern of its sides on the clay (photo 1). With a knife, follow the impressions and cut out the piece.

Using the bottom of the cardboard container as a

*Please turn the page*



1. Clay slabs, large enough to line the two cardboard containers, first are rolled out using thickness guides and a rolling pin. Then the container is rolled over the clay to impress its pattern on the slab.



2. Clay circles are cut, using the bottom of the container as a pattern. Then the circles are painted with thick slip.



3. The containers are lined with clay. About  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch of excess clay is left on the top of one. Rims are coated with slip.



4. Containers are pressed firmly together rim to rim, forcing out excess clay. Seam is smoothed with thumb.



5. Top container is removed with razor blade. Two tin cans are used to cut a foot rim from a slab of clay.



6. The foot rim is painted with slip and pressed into place with a flat board. The joint is wiped clean with the finger.



7. Handle is cut from a slab and attached to the pitcher with slip. It must be large enough to afford a good grip.



8. When piece is leather hard, top is cut out to form pouring lip. Moisten the lip in order to shape it.



9. Because of the irregular shape of the top, the piece is dried over a mailing tube. Turn frequently to prevent warping.



10. Pitcher is decorated in contrasting colors to accent the lines of the shape; then clear-glazed.

## MAKE A PITCHER from cheese boxes (continued)

pattern, cut two clay circles. Apply very thick slip (thick enough to stand up in piles) around the portion of the bottom where it will meet the side walls of the piece (photo 2).

Line the cardboard containers, putting the circle in the bottom first; then fitting in the slab for the side walls. Trim the clay at the top of one container so it is even with the top rim. Leave about  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch of excess clay at the rim of the second container (photo 3). Paint the rims of both containers with slip.

Now place the lined containers rim to rim and press them firmly together, forcing out the excess clay at the seam (photo 4). The clay that is squeezed to the outside is pressed into the walls with a wiping action of the thumb. The whole circumference of the joint is thus smoothed and firmly knit. This step also has trapped air inside the clay cylinder.

Since the moist clay is completely sealed within the two moisture-proof containers, it will not dry out unless the containers are removed. At this time, remove the top container by slitting it into two pieces with a razor blade. Now using two empty tin cans of different sizes, cut a foot rim from a slab of clay (photo 5). The thickness of the clay slab will determine the height of the foot rim, so carefully consider this proportion before rolling out the slab.

Paint the foot rim with slip and press it into place with a flat piece of wood (photo 6). Wipe the joint—inside and out—with the tip of the finger to remove the slip that has been squeezed out, leaving a nice rounded weld. You will discover that considerable pressure can be applied to the foot rim at this point even though the clay still is soft. The trapped air supports the clay form just like a balloon, allowing fairly rigorous handling without distortion.

Remove the second cardboard container and cut out the handle from a slab of clay. When cutting the handle, remember to make it big enough to afford a good grip. *Don't create a finger trap.* The hook at the top of the handle affords a grip for the thumb for greater stability while pouring. Secure the handle to the side of the pot with slip (photo 7). Use additional clay around the joints to strengthen them and also to create

a smooth transition in line from the handle to the body of the pot.

The air trapped inside the pitcher affords a good opportunity for you to make adjustments in various parts of the pot without danger of its collapsing. It also is possible to alter the contour of the pot somewhat by pressing it with the hands or paddling it with a board. After you have made any necessary adjustments, allow the pot to become leather hard. The trapped air will cause the pot to bulge slightly as it shrinks, giving it a full, rounded look.

When the piece is leather hard, cut out the top and form the pouring lip (photo 8). When cutting the lip, remember to make it deep enough to concentrate the stream of liquid. It may be necessary to moisten the lip a bit in order to shape it. Now also smooth out the interior of the pot.

Since the top rim of the pitcher is irregular, the piece must be supported upside down on a cardboard mailing tube (photo 9). Turn it upright and upside down alternately as it dries. Uniform drying prevents warping.

I decorated the demonstration piece with black and white slip (photo 10), making the shapes of the

light and dark areas accent the lines of the pitcher. I chose black and white because both of them would contrast with the medium brown color of the natural clay. This afforded three contrasting values which are sufficient for dramatic eye appeal.

It is well to avoid using two colors which do not contrast on the light-dark scale, since the real drama of the design rests with the value of the contrasts regardless of the colors used. You will find that using different colors of the same value will give a vibrating sensation and flatness devoid of visual energy.

I used a plain transparent glaze on the demonstration piece. I felt that the grogged clay and colored areas afforded ample interest without the use of a more active or colorful glaze.

This building technique can be used for pitchers of many different sizes and shapes. Simply locate the appropriate cardboard containers, or make them yourself. There is no reason why you cannot make a cardboard container of a specific size and shape to suit yourself. The pitcher need not be a cylinder. It can be square, hexagonal or any one of a number of shapes. •



POURING IS EASY from this hand-built pitcher. The large handle affords a good grip, and the hook at the top of the handle acts as a thumb rest for greater stability while pouring. Here Steve and Tom try out the pitcher their Dad made—and a few of mom's cookies.



# Hand-size

*Nature supplies the molds  
for the "young set."*

*A stone, a little clay,  
a little patience  
is all that's needed.*

*Result—a hand-made pot  
ready for proud display  
by its youthful creator.*

**C**HILDREN love to gather stones; and once they have been introduced to this ceramic project they will like it even more!

Stones are wonderful as hump molds. Since smooth stones can be found in all sizes and shapes you will never want for variety. This is an excellent project to follow a hike along a lake shore or river bank; or perhaps a trip to a gravel bank. It is a fine project for campers ranging in age from 8 to 11 or for the classroom—particularly third, fourth and fifth graders.

Only the very basic materials are needed. In addition to a variety of stones you need good clay (any type), a rolling pin or large dowel stick, sponge, knife, some slip, one or two underglazes or engobes and clear glaze.

Here is the procedure for the children to follow: the numbers correspond to those in the photographs.

**1.** Select some smooth, dry stones of interesting shapes that are a little smaller than the hand. (These will be easiest to handle.)

**2.** Using the rolling pin or dowel rod, roll out a slab from the lump of well-wedged clay until it is about one-third of an inch thick. If you roll the clay on the back of a piece of oil cloth or on canvas it will be easiest to handle.

**3.** Cut a shape from the slab that will be appropriate for the particular stone. Circles, rectangles or free forms can all be used.

**4.** Lift out the cut portion and drape it over the dry stone. Stroke it with a sponge until it hugs the stone. If the shape isn't exactly what you had planned you can trim it while it still rests on the stone. The edges can be smoothed and the surface can be textured if you like while it still has the support of the "mold" underneath. Stones are somewhat porous so the clay will not stick.

**5.** Now for the feet. Roll three little clay balls in your hands. Using thick slip, paint one face of each ball and stick them in place on the little up-turned pot. With practice you can

select just the right place to put the feet so that the pot will have "lift" and more stature when resting on a table. Unless properly stuck on, the feet will crack off during drying and firing, so use a generous amount of slip. You can make the slip by mixing your clay with excess water.

**6.** Remove the shape as soon as it is hard enough to hold its form. If left too long on the mold the piece may crack. The piece can be decorated now, or when it is completely dry or after bisque firing.

In this photo the authors' daughter, Colleen, demonstrates the sgraffito technique. She paints the entire surface with a contrasting-color engobe and when it is dry she scratches a design through the slip exposing the color of the clay underneath.

The piece is now set aside to dry after which it is bisque fired. A coat of clear glaze and refiring completes the project.

Remind the youngsters to leave the little feet unglazed. This will eliminate the need for stiltng. •

# Stones Make Interesting Molds

by MILDRED AND VERNON SEELEY



1. Dry, easy-to-handle stones of all shapes are selected.



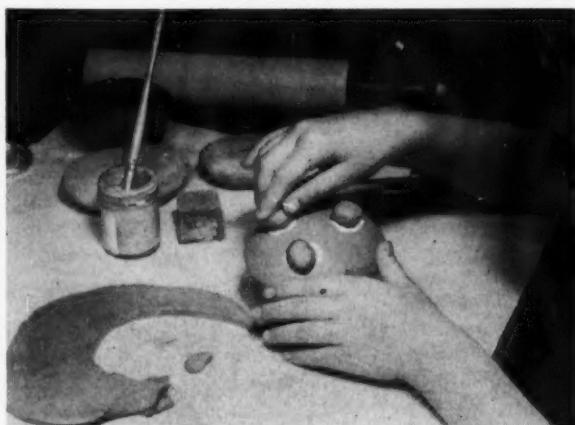
2. Well-wedged clay is rolled about one-third of an inch thick.



3. A sharp tool is used to cut clay to "fit" shape of stone.



4. Clay is draped over stone and stroked with a damp sponge.



5. The feet (rolled clay balls) are put on pot with thick slip.



6. Removed from stone "mold", the piece is ready to decorate.

# Strictly Stoneware

## Learning About Glazes (part 6)

by F. CARLTON BALL



*In the September issue, Carlton Ball responded to many requests with this new series on making glazes. His approach is designed to help readers help themselves. To date, he has covered glaze-making materials, three series of glaze tests and a color test. If you have missed the beginning articles in this series, back issues may still be obtained. See page 36 for details.—Ed.*

LAST MONTH we made a series of colored glazes and fired them to cone 10 oxidation and cone 10 reduction. The oxidation results were discussed; now for the reduction series.

### Colors in Cone 10 Reduction:

4% copper carbonate—pink-gray semi-matt. Try 1% copper next time for red.  
½% cobalt oxide—pale blue-violet or mauve, semi-matt in texture.

4% manganese carbonate—opalescent with tan specks, shiny, no violet color.

5% red iron oxide—shiny opaque brown with gold flecks floating on surface.

5% tin vanadium stain—gave pale green gloss with opaque white specks, glossy.

10% rutile—shiny, opaque tan.

7% tin oxide—shiny, clear colorless glaze.

10% flint—in oxidation, a bright viscous clear glaze with blue-white opaque flecks, making the glaze milky white. In reduction, a slightly less bright surface and nearly complete opacity.

20% flint—in oxidation, a bright viscous glaze almost opaque because of blue-white flecks floating in the glaze. In reduction, a nearly bright surface and a good opaque glaze.

10% kaolin—in oxidation, a bright viscous pale tan glaze not clear because of minute bubbles in the glaze; would be clear in thin application. In reduction, a bright viscous pale green-white color, milky because of many minute bubbles in the glaze.

20% kaolin—in oxidation, the same as the 10% addition except the glaze is more viscous. In reduction, the same as the 10% addition but more viscous.

10% talc—in oxidation, an exquisite white satin matt glaze with depth and great quality (try this glaze over engobes). In reduction, a beautiful white satin matt glaze, nearly the duplicate of the oxidation firing (try this glaze on a pot with over-painting of oxides).

10% dolomite—in oxidation, a beautiful white satin matt as good as the talc addition but not as opaque. This may be the best glaze over engobes.

10% barium carbonate—in oxidation, a bright yellowish clear glaze with a mottled pattern of opaque white specks floating on the surface like sea foam after a wave breaks on the sand of a beach. Texture probably not as good on a vertical surface. In reduction, the same effect as the oxidation firing except the color is pale gray-green with white mottled texture.

10% zinc oxide—in oxidation, a bright glaze, transparent where thin with an exciting opalescent pale blue where thick. Appears to be more fluid than other tests. In reduction, a bright beautiful opalescent blue-white glaze with more quality than in oxidation and probably superior on a vertical surface.

10% magnesium carbonate—in oxidation, a beautiful satin translucent white effect like fog at dawn. More translucent than the dolomite test. In reduction, an excellent white matt, the most dull surface of the tests.

10% potash feldspar—in oxidation, a beautiful white satin matt glaze, nearly opaque perhaps the best mixture of all. In reduction, an opaque white satin matt. Check to see if the glaze has a tendency to crawl.

5% white lead—in oxidation, an excellent white satin matt. In reduction, a very opaque, coarse textured satin matt dirty white glaze.

5% colemanite—in oxidation, a good white satin matt slightly translucent, not as good as the last three listed. In reduction, a semi-bright opaque white glaze with slightly coarse surface on vertical pots. May be opalescent blue.

10% whiting—in oxidation, a good white satin matt slightly translucent, not as good as some of the other tests. In reduction, a very opaque white semi-bright glaze. A superior white glaze compared to 7% of tin in oxidation.

5% titanium oxide—in oxidation, a bright yellow-white opaque glaze with a hint of underlining blue around the edges. In reduction, bright opaque glaze with subtle light color, finely mottled pale tan violet, gray and white.

### Suggestions for Additional Tests:

Ten percent zinc and 10% flint (added together, in a glaze; 10% zinc and 5% titanium oxide; 10% magnesium and ½% cobalt; 10% magnesium, 10% whiting and 2% iron oxide).

Remember that glazes which appear to be beautiful on the test tile may not be as good on the vertical

surface of a pot. And a glaze which appears to be poor on the test tile may be excellent on the vertical sides of a pot. The tile tests should be compared to tests on a vertical surface. This will train you to observe and give you the ability to read the results of the test tiles.

### GLAZE #27

	Per cent
Potash feldspar	43
Colemanite	9
Dolomite	8
Talc	15
Kaolin	5
Flint	20

This is a beautiful glaze, but each potter must learn to use it in his own way. The glaze will be different with each body on which it is used. It will be different in each kiln in which it is fired. This gives each potter using it a chance to develop an effect entirely his own.

The glaze tests already given also can be applied to this glaze. If 10% talc is added to the basic glaze, the recipe would be:

	Parts
Potash feldspar	43
Colemanite	9
Dolomite	8
Talc	25
Kaolin	5
Flint	20

110 parts

To convert this "parts" recipe to a percentage recipe, the quantity of each ingredient is divided by the total of all of them (in this case, 110) and then multiplied by 100. Using this formula, the percentage recipe then will read:

### GLAZE #27E

	per cent
Potash feldspar	39
Colemanite	8
Dolomite	7
Talc	23
Kaolin	5
Flint	18

If the recipe calling for a 10% (Continued on Page 36)

Incorporate Tiny Mosaic Pieces in  
your Clay Work to Make Pottery  
that will Appeal to the  
Eye as well as Your  
Creative Instincts



## Let Your Mosaics "Go To Pot"

by MARIAN McINTYRE

**V**AST NUMBERS OF clay-working hobbyists have been bitten by the mosaic bug. Many, however, work in this new medium with some misgivings—they are reluctant to steal the time from their ceramic activities.

Here is one way you can combine the two crafts incorporating the best features of each. This is not a new idea; but if you have not yet tried it, you will find it can add an effective dimension to your pottery work.

The examples shown here were made by Eleanore Cottrell, a potting enthusiast of Columbus, Ohio. As an aid to others she offers the following helpful suggestions.

Plan your ceramic piece with the

mosaic addition in mind. You can build the piece by any of your favorite techniques; however, avoid thin walls. When the piece is completed and firm enough to hold its shape sketch the areas that will hold the tesserae.

Using your regular clay-working tools (wire-end sculpture tools are the most helpful) dig out the sections that will hold the tesserae. Dig deep enough to allow for the thickness of the tesserae *plus the mastic*. If you will be using homemade tesserae where the thickness will be varied, dig deep enough to accommodate the thickest pieces. If the tesserae are to come up the side of the pot (as they do in the examples shown here) leave

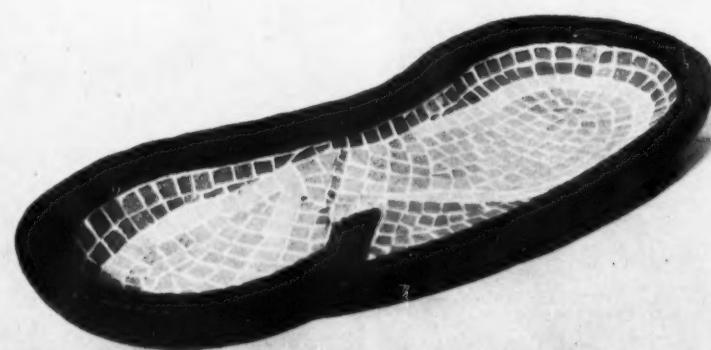
an overhanging lip along the top so the edges of the tesserae are hidden.

When this is completed, glaze and fire the piece (or bisque fire before glazing if you prefer) but do not glaze the areas which will hold the tesserae. Mastic gives a better bond if the surface is not slick. You cannot fire the piece after the tesserae have been set in so be sure the pottery receives all the firing necessary beforehand.

Now apply the mastic and insert the tesserae in the design you have worked out. In each of these examples Mrs. Cottrell used commercial Venetian-glass tesserae; however, they were broken into various shapes rather than used in the square form in which they come. The color and flow of the mosaic pieces should complement the color and lines of the pot so that the final design ties together as a unit.

After the mastic has hardened, grout between the tesserae with a fine tile cement. The grout can be colored if you wish using ceramic coloring oxides or any water-soluble colors such as artists' water colors, fabric dyes (*Tintex*) or others.

Plan uses for your "mosaic pottery" that will show off the mosaic designs to advantage. The outside wall of tall vases or bottles and sculpture can be effectively inset with mosaics; however, the inside of deep bowls are usually best avoided. Mrs. Cottrell particularly enjoys floating flowers in the shallow pieces shown here, although there are many other effective ways in which these can be used. •





JIM KREITER ENAMELS

## DON'T Clean That Firescale!

**I**F YOU HAVE EVER had the urge to defy the law (such as loitering under a "No Loitering" sign), no doubt you have had the urge to enamel over copper that was badly firescaled. At least, you may have wondered what would happen if you did violate this standard rule.

Other enamelists have—including Jim Kreiter. Some of the results have been quite interesting.

As you know, when a piece of copper goes into a hot enameling furnace the surface of the copper burns and a black coating forms. This coating is called firescale. The usual procedure before enameling is to remove all firescale by rubbing with steel wool, etching in acid, using copper cleaner and/or other techniques. According to "the books" only clean, polished copper should be enameled—at least under normal conditions. But you will be adding another technique to your repertoire if you ignore this basic rule and try enameling over firescale.

The procedure used by Jim Kreiter is to apply the counter enamel to the clean back of a piece and fire as one would normally. During the firing, firescale forms on the unprotected face of the piece. This is carefully studied to see if it will lend itself to a design.

In general, the firescale effect can be placed into

three design categories: (1)—A strong, bold firescale pattern that can be utilized as the major design element; (2)—A somewhat subdued pattern that can be incorporated into the design as one of the elements; (3)—A subtle, nondescript type scattered haphazardly over the piece, that can be used as a simple background effect. In the examples shown here one of each type is illustrated.

Not all firescale patterns will be interesting enough to use. Most often they will not have any design value and you will want to clean the surface and reinsert the piece in the kiln to see if a more interesting firescale design can be developed.

Be careful with extremely heavy scaling. This will flake off during the enameling and will cause unsightly discolorations. Heavily scaled areas should be rubbed with steel wool or rough cloth before enameling so that loose pieces will be removed.

Perhaps the most successful way to use this technique is to merely keep the idea in mind while following your normal course of enameling activities. When you see an interesting firescale pattern develop set the piece aside, and subsequently work out a new design putting the firescale to work for you. •



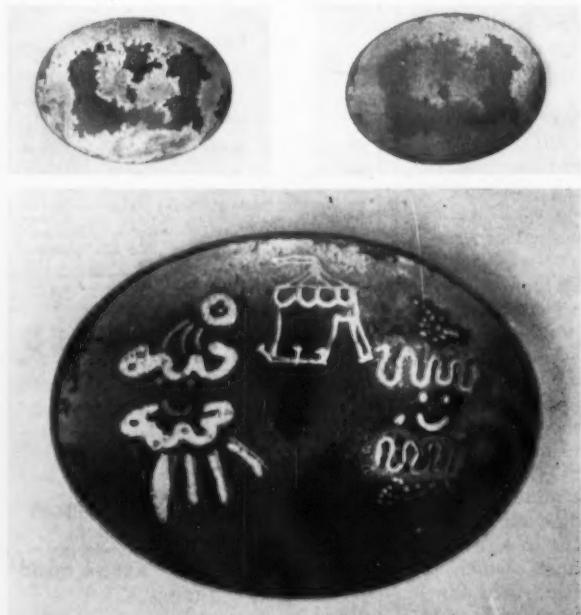
INCORPORATED into the design, the firescale pattern below became the leaves of a series of trees. First, clear flux was fired on overall. Then the tree trunks were stenciled on. Finally, the birds and other leaf shapes were painted on in gold.



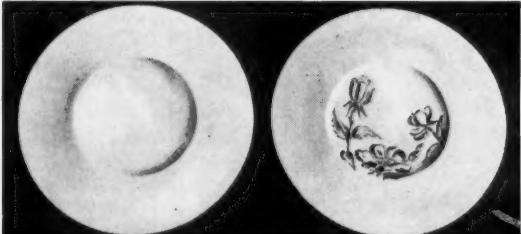


GENERAL BACKGROUND is the way this faint, delicate firescale pattern was used. The design portrays an under-water feeling—heightened by blues and greens blending into each other. First clear, blue and green transparents were dusted on and fired. Then stencil shapes were dusted on and fired. Silver foil shapes were laid on and more blues and greens fired on. Finally, black lines were painted in overglaze. The lacy pattern of the firescale adds to the wispy, ghost-like under-water effect.

MAJOR DESIGN element was the choice for the bold scaling shown below at the upper left. A medium value transparent green was dusted on overall to give a subdued brown and green design, shown at the right. The small tray could have been left this way; to show an alternative, the shapes were converted to depict a circus theme by painting clowns and a tent in bright colors.



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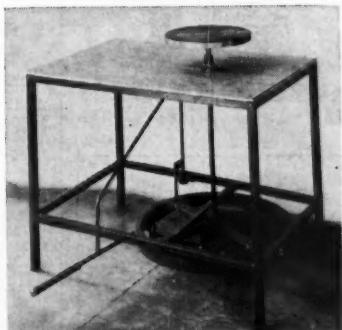


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## Hamada

(Continued from Page 19)

platte similar to one I had seen at the Hamada show might be for sale. A long conversation in Japanese ensued. Then I was told that there was indeed such a platter on hand—but not on display, since Hamada was holding it for an exhibit at a big department store in Tokyo's Ginza district.

After further discussion the platter appeared. To me it was a wholly satisfying piece. Eagerly I asked the inevitable question, "How much does it cost?" Finding that I could afford it, I had a rosy vision of my platter on display with a tantalizing sold sign confronting rival collectors who found it after me.

Could I buy the platter now and collect it after the exhibit? I could. And so it was arranged.

When we had completed our purchases, Hamada himself graciously came out to meet us and personally guided us around the grounds of his estate. We peered with wonder through the door of a kiln which would soon be readied for the next firing and watched with fascination as another of Hamada's sons deftly wrapped our purchases in rice straw.

Playing in the yard was an arrestingly handsome little boy. He also turned out to be one of Hamada's children. Captivated by his charm I tried to catch a picture. But every time he saw me trying to focus the camera on him, he darted away like a deer. As the child of a national celebrity, he had obviously had his fill of pictures. Hamada must have been equally bored with the never-ending requests to pose for pictures. That is the price of fame. He patiently posed for us at the doorway of his home nonetheless.

By this time our driver had wandered off and we were left without an interpreter. We started to take our leave. As I now reconstruct the events of that enchanted day, I believe Hamada must have wished us a good journey and started to go into his house alone. But at the time I thought he planned to show us something inside and started to follow him. Before I recognized my blunder, Hamada must have observed my momentary misapprehension of his intention and my pleasure at the prospect of seeing the interior of his home. Anyhow, after I had stopped myself with a sudden sense of blundering, he turned and, calling to the others, beckoned for us to enter. Behind the sliding panels which he pushed open, a delightful room panel-

(Continued on Page 34)

## Kingspin

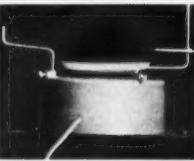
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# ... Suggestions

(Continued from Page 14)

## Leveling Mosaic Surfaces

Often in mosaics, areas where jewels or stones are placed turn out to be below the surface of the tiles. To make these level the following ideas are helpful. When using the white glues, mix glue and Kleenex tissue together. Apply as thick as needed to make pieces level. Also, a small piece of balsa wood can be dipped in glue and placed under the area to be raised. Balsa is easy to cut and comes in a variety of thicknesses.

—Peg Townsend, Tucson, Ariz.

## Marked Stilts

A stilt that has been used under a colored glaze piece and later under a clear or white glazed piece almost always leaves a spot of color where the split wire touches the ware. I always found these spots quite objectionable until I began marking my stilts for all white pieces.

Mark all your stilts, which are to be used only for white or clear glazed pieces, by writing "wht" on the stilt with a black ceramic pencil. This will leave a permanent mark which will not fire off, and you will be able to separate these stilts from the ones used for colored glaze firings.

—Marie Carr, Joplin, Mo.

## Prevent Plates from Warping

In the past I have had trouble with red clay plates warping. Now I wait until they are leather hard before removing from the mold. Then I place them upside down on my deep freeze (stainless steel top). After several hours, moisture collects under the plate, the rim is quite damp but the plate is level. The rim is easily sponged to finish.

—Ruth Rossmiller, Chagrin Falls, Ohio

## Hot Kilns and Happy Motherhood

(Continued from Page 20)

Since these regular two-hour work periods, I've exhibited in three juried shows in the last year, received favorable mention in the newspaper, and have sold most of my entries. I don't say this to boast; I'm just impressed at the good progress one can make, even with a small amount of time. It's the regularity that counts—you don't feel you've gone stale.

My last suggestion: IGNORE YOUR CHILDREN WITH LOVING SKILL. Their latent resourcefulness and originality will come to the fore.

In my early motherhood, I thought a good mother was one who saw to it that her children had "worthwhile activities" all day long. We creative mothers are usually more eager to provide creative experience for our children. Now I believe that creativity develops better without having mommy so involved. The more I hovered and made suggestions, the more dependent they became. One day I took a deep breath and flatly refused to be a fire engine. It was hard the first time, but I kept repeating it until they got the idea.

There are times when one must ignore one's children to do necessary household chores. We don't feel guilty about this. Now I know that one need not feel guilty about detaching himself, within reason, for personal pursuits.

It keeps me a far, far better mother—in a far, far happier home. Have a try! •

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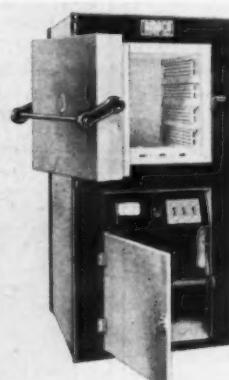
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(Continued on Page 36)

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# Ceram Activities

people, places & things



**ALASKAN SHARE PROGRAM:** Several years ago a few people in Juneau, Alaska, interested in ceramics, joined together to furnish a studio-workshop with necessary equipment for hobby potters. This developed into the group known today as the **Alaska Potters**.

In September of each year a new course in ceramics is offered free. (This last September brought in 20 new members.) Instruction covers all phases of pottery work with the experienced members teaching. Originality is stressed throughout and the lessons are very informal and of a workshop nature.

President **Betty Guill** says: "Most people do not realize that for the greater part of the year our only form of transportation in and out of Juneau is by air which means we cannot hop into a car and drive to a pottery supply shop . . ." Therefore, these people have learned to do things for themselves. The more advanced members help the new ones, so that all information is shared among the members of this group.

The Alaska Potters are the sole source of supplies in southeastern Alaska. Quoting Mrs. Guill again: "Certain standard supplies are stocked regularly; other items may be ordered through the supply officer. Because freight rates to Juneau are very high we find that it pays to teach our members to do as many things for themselves as possible."

Each year the Alaska Potters furnishes one of the largest displays at the Alaska Arts and Crafts Annual Show. Each item entered must be original and every show challenges these hobbyists to produce exhibits of more varied interests and ideas. The photograph above

shows a small part of their recent exhibit with lamps, bowls, vases and Easter Egg tree.

Annually the Alaska Potters holds a ceramic sale which has become an established event and draws customers from the entire area. Each member contributes at least one good item for the sale and any other items sold for members during the affair brings 10 per cent to the studio coffers. Usually this is the only money-making project of the year and the money earned is put back into the studio for improvements, equipment repairs and books added to the library. ("Most of our new ideas come from your fine magazine," says Mrs. Guill.) Most of all, however, these sales teach them to work together as a team. One recent order for 200 pieces brought about a "production-line" method.



Much of the enthusiasm shown by this group can be traced to Mrs. Guill, an energetic worker who believes all things are possible. "People are in and out of the studio daily working, studying or firing. It's a busy place these days." This is evidenced by the accompanying photo.

(Continued on Page 35)

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## Letters

(Continued from Page 4)

of 65 blind and visually handicapped persons. I have started writing of my experiences with the groups.

Please inform me as to what makes an article suitable for publication, how they are selected and if there is any payment for them.

ANITA GRAFF

New York Guild for the Jewish Blind Group Work & Recreation Dept.

New York, N. Y.

◆ The vast majority of CM articles are written by the ceramists themselves; the CM staff acts mostly in an advisory and editing capacity. This, we feel, helps maintain the lucid and highly informative quality of the articles. We are always delighted to send full details to anyone interested in preparing editorial material for our consideration. Just drop a note to the attention of the editor.—Ed.

### SEASON'S GREETINGS

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO LOU FARBER AND SPENCE DAVIS THEIR WONDERFUL STAFF TO POTTERS EVERYWHERE TO ADVERTISERS TOO BEST WISHES OF ALL TO CERAMICS MONTHLY THAT KEEPS MY KILN HOT MY HEART WARM AND FILLS ME WITH BURNING IDEAS.

SALLY GALLAWAY

INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

◆ Many thanks to Mrs. Gallaway for her thoughtful telegram which arrived in time for Christmas but too late to be included in the January issue; and thanks to our many other friends who sent greetings.—Ed.

### WANTS GLASS ARTICLES

Enclosed is a check for the following gift subscriptions . . .

## Hamada

(Continued from Page 30)

ed with fine wood and brightened by polished brass and antique and modern porcelains and stoneware of exquisite beauty also invited.

I demurred and probably would have retired in confusion if my companions and Driversan hadn't come trooping back to join me. After an exchange of apologies and protests on our part and polite urgings from Hamada, we were happily persuaded to bring our lunch from the car and to eat it at his fireside. We had qualms but the temptation was too great to withstand. And so we had tea with Hamada. I don't recall that he could be persuaded to share our K rations — nor do I blame him. But we sipped green tea in a strange world of beauty as guests of the potter. All too soon we had eaten and were left without an excuse for staying longer.

On the way home we relived the day and congratulated one another on our purchases.

"Drive carefully with our treasures," said my friend jestingly to the driver.

"That I will," Driversan answered seriously. Then with unaccustomed

I am glad you include articles on copper enameling. I would like very much to see a series of articles on bent glass or slumped glass, with some specific instructions on suitable types of molds and mold releases, and types of decorative material which can be used in laminated plate glass. The kiln technique to avoid over-melting would be helpful too. . .

NORA PERLEY

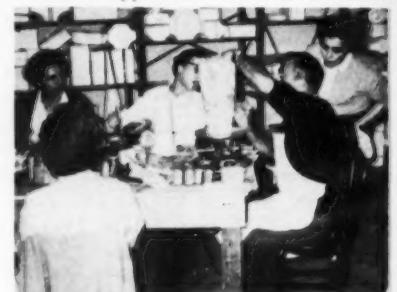
Omaha, Nebraska

◆ Work in slumped and laminated glass is receiving careful consideration by the editors.—Ed.

### BELLAIRE & HANDBOOK: A HIT

Please ship us 24 copies of Marc Bellaire's book "Underglaze Decorations." Since Marc taught at our shop we have sold our complete stock of these books and are having more calls . . .

Marc's appearance here in his home



town certainly was a success. All classes were full and we have a waiting list for his next appearance. Attached is a photo taken at one of the classes, which I thought might be of interest.

HOWARD L. PELKEY

Secor Ceramic Supply,  
Toledo, Ohio

## Hamada

(Continued from Page 30)

vulnerability, he added, "I too have a treasure—a gift for my wife."

We could see that he wanted us to admire his gift and were curious anyhow. At the next stop we asked him to show it.

Tenderly Driversan unwrapped a little vase from its nest of rice and straw. It was exquisite—far nicer than anything we had seen or bought.

"How much . . . ?" I started to ask and then caught myself. Even as I stopped my question, I saw on my friend's face an appeal to me not to ask it. We both knew that Driversan could not have afforded to pay the price for which Hamada could have sold the piece to us or to a well-to-do Japanese. This was one time we must not hang a price tag on beauty.

The master potter, the famous Hamada, had seen our driver's appreciation of his craft and let him buy a perfect vase at a price he could pay. What he paid was a secret we must not probe with our questions.

"It is priceless," we said sincerely.

Driversan smiled agreement as he tenderly put the vase away. •

**CeramActivities**  
(Continued from Page 33)



**AWARD WINNERS** in the Michiana Ceramics Exhibition (left to right): 7" stoneware vase by Roy A. Pedersen, Northville, Mich.; 11" stoneware bottle by John P. Tyson, Ypsilanti, Mich.; and stoneware bowl, 3½" high, by Charlene Fisher, Ypsilanti, Mich.

**MICHIANA REGIONAL:** The 6th Annual Michiana Ceramics Exhibition, sponsored by the South Bend (Indiana) Art Association last May, drew 151 entries from 60 artists in the region. The competition was open to residents and former residents of Indiana and Michigan who were allowed three entries in three classes: Ceramics, enamels, and ceramic sculpture.

More than \$400 in prizes was awarded; \$160 of this in purchase awards. Edris Eckhardt of Cleveland judged the show and accepted 93 pieces for exhibition. Several of the award-winning pieces are pictured above.

**NEW YORK SHOW:** The first Ceramic Show, sponsored by the New York State Ceramic Dealers' Association, Inc., was held in September in Syracuse. The areas of the state association are Western New York, Southern Tier, Eastern and Mid-Eastern. All four chapters participated. Only prize-winning pieces, in the hobbyist category, from the spring "area" shows were eligible.

Winners in more than one category were Agnes McKeon, Agnes Ingraham, Ruth Eager, Edith Geiger, William Kelly, Lorna Berry, Audrey Waite, Marion Ford, Mary Jane Sisson, Judy Schrauder and Chas. W. Campbell. (Space prevents listing all winners as submitted, for all categories.)

New officers of the association are president, Harold S. Goldstein, Buffalo Ceramic & Supply; vice president, Beth Riley, Beth's Ceramics, Endwell; recording secretary, Joel Witt, Joel Witt Studio, Buffalo; corresponding secretary, Lisa K. Sibson, Lisa K. Sibson Studio, Albany.

**"OUR TOWN" COMPETITION:** A mural and sculpture competition, spon-

sored jointly by the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute and 13 professional organizations, was open for state-wide entry in New York. The show was named "Art for Our Town" and had 151 project-designs submitted by 94 artists.

The project award design pictured here was submitted by Celia L. Clark, Delhi, for an indoor decorative water basin with sculpture. This ceramic piece received a \$150 award.

The jury consisted of Roy R. Neuberger, president of the American Federation of Arts; Anton Refregier, well-known mural painter; and Jose de Creeft, a sculptor. One person from each of the sponsors sat with the jury while his project-design was being judged.

The purpose of this competition was to stimulate greater use of murals and sculpture in public places.



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**Shopper**

(Continued from Page 32)

**Color Choosing Made Easy**

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**Strictly Stoneware**

(Continued from Page 26)

addition of magnesium carbonate were converted to a percentage recipe, it would appear like this:

GLAZE #27I	Per cent
Potash feldspar	39
Colemanite	8
Dolomite	7
Talc	14
Kaolin	5
Flint	18
Magnesium carbonate	9

If each ingredient in glazes #27, 27E and 27I were added and totaled and then converted, the percentage recipe would be:

	Per cent
Potash feldspar	40.3
Colemanite	8.3
Dolomite	7.3
Talc	17.4
Kaolin	5.0
Flint	18.7
Magnesium carbonate	3.0

Each of these glazes works well on pottery, but each one is different. The #27 glaze alone can be easily made into 20 or 30 different glazes. Every potter can make his own glaze and it will not be necessary for him to keep it secret. With the few glazes given in these articles, together with the various tests (and perhaps some arithmetic), hundreds of different glazes can be produced. For the person who is interested in glazes only, these basic glaze recipes provide him with many experiments which can result in the development of countless beautiful glazes.

*NEXT MONTH, Carlton Ball takes a rest from the glaze-making series. He presents instead a special photo-feature on wax resist decorating. IN SUBSEQUENT ISSUES, he will conclude this series by covering Basic Materials, Fluxes and Some Final Tests.—Ed.*

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